

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A software system for managing available to  
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer  
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of seller models representing sellers  
that sell at least one product, the seller models  
operable to forecast for at least one product and  
operable to choose commitment levels creating forecast  
requests;

10 the forecast requests receiving promises made by  
supplier sites to provide product allocation to the  
organization; and

the product allocation available to the sellers to  
promise to actual customer requests;

15 wherein the plurality of seller models comprise a  
hierarchy that has an organization and one or more  
members such that product allocation to the organization  
can be used by the organization or promised to and used  
by the members; and

20 wherein the organization has a portion of the  
product allocation designated as first-come-first-served  
product, the first-come-first-served product available  
for consumption by the members as needed to promise to  
actual customer requests.

25 2. The software system of Claim 1, wherein the  
organization further has a portion of the product.

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PATENT APPLICATION

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~~allocation designated as retained product, the retained  
product under control of the organization and available  
for consumption by the organization or for promising to  
members.~~

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3. A software system for managing available to  
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer  
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of seller models representing sellers  
that sell at least one product, the seller models  
operable to forecast for at least one product and  
operable to choose commitment levels creating forecast  
requests;

10 the forecast requests receiving promises made by  
supplier sites to provide product allocation to the  
organization; and

the product allocations available to the sellers to  
promise to actual customer requests;

15 wherein the plurality of seller models comprise a  
hierarchy that has an organization and one or more  
members such that product allocation to the organization  
can be used by the organization or promised to and used  
by the members; and

20 wherein the organization has an ATP horizon defined  
at a greater granularity than the forecast, the ATP  
horizon having ATP entries representing an amount of  
product from the product allocation that is available  
during each forecast period.

4. A software system for managing available to  
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer  
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of seller models representing sellers  
that sell at least one product; the seller models  
operable to forecast for the at least one product and  
operable to choose commitment levels creating forecast  
requests;

10 the forecast requests receiving promises made by  
supplier sites to provide product allocation to the  
organization; and

the product allocations available to the sellers to  
promise to actual customer requests;

15 wherein the plurality of seller models comprise a  
hierarchy that has an organization and one or more  
members such that product allocation to the organization  
can be used by the organization or promised to and used  
by the members; and

20 wherein the organization promises product to the  
members based upon an automatic allocation policy.

25 5. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the  
automatic allocation policy allows the organization to  
designate forecast entry of a member as a zero-ATP entry  
such that the available-to-promise product at the member  
is zero for that forecast entry.

6. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is an FCFS allocation policy.

5 7. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a per allocated allocation policy.

10 8. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a per committed allocation policy.

15 9. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a member rank allocation policy.

10. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a fixed split allocation policy.

11 A software system for managing available to  
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer  
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of generic product models each  
representing a generic product, each generic product  
model specifying one component of a plurality of possible  
components;

10 a plurality of specific product models each  
representing a specific product, each specific product  
model specifying all components of the specific product;

wherein each component specified by each specific  
product model is specified by one of the generic product  
models, such that each specific product model is related  
to a subset of the generic product models; and

15 wherein a customer request matching a specific  
product can be fulfilled by available-to-promise of the  
specific product or by available-to-promise of all  
related generic products.

20 12. The software system of Claim 11, wherein the  
generic product models and specific product models are  
repeated across a seller hierarchy, such that, in  
addition to generic-specific relationships, there are  
organization-member relationships between generic  
25 products and between specific products.